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REMARKS

The present application was filed as a Divisional application of U.S. Pat. Application Ser. No. 08/952,445 filed November 18, 1997. In the Office Action dated May 28, 1999, in the parent application, Applicants were given a two-way restriction requirement. Applicants elected the Claims in Group I in the parent case. Thus, the present application is directed to the claims designated as Group II (i.e., originally filed Claims 23, and 25 - 32). In a Preliminary Amendment filed with the present application on October 15, 2001, Applicants cancelled Claims 1-22, 24, 31 and 32 and Claims 33-39 were added. Thus, as of the present Office Action, Claims 23, 25-30, and 33-39 were pending. Applicants note that the Examiner indicates that Claim 33 is allowed and Claims 29 and 30 are objected to. Applicants respectfully submit that the amended pending Claims are allowable.

Applicants note that the Examiner has noted that some of the arguments previously made have overcome certain rejections. In the Examiner's current rejections, Claims 23, 25-28, and 35-39 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as allegedly not meeting the written description requirement and allegedly not being enabled. In particular, the Examiner argues that there is insufficient information in the present application to convey to one of skill in the art that the inventors were in possession of the claimed invention. The Examiner further argues that while the Specification is enabling for the esterase of SEQ ID NO:28, there is insufficient enablement for any esterase comprising SEQ D NO:26. Applicants must respectfully disagree. Nonetheless, in order to further their business interests and the prosecution of the present application, yet without acquiescing to the Examiner's arguments, Applicants have amended the Claims to remove the recitation of SEQ ID NO:26, and indicate that the esterase is an *Aspergillus* enzyme. As these amendments find more than sufficient support in the Specification as filed, no new matter is added. Applicants respectfully submit that the Claims are in condition for allowance. Applicants also reserve the right to prosecute the originally filed, narrower, and/or broader Claims in one or more additional application(s).


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CONCLUSION

All grounds of rejection and objection of the Office Action of January 6, 2004, having been addressed, reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner believe that a telephone interview would aid in the prosecution of this application, Applicants encourage the Examiner to call the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted

Dated: March 4, 2004


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